

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01

SAJ-01 /068 W

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P R 030950Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6851

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 0013

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, SN

SUBJECT: ELECTION RESULTS AND AFTERMATH

REF: (A) SINGAPORE 5740, (B) SINGAPORE 5779, (C) SINGAPORE 5756

SUMMARY. ADDITIONAL DATA ON THE RECENT ELECTION AS WELL AS
SELECTED POST-ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS ARE REPORTED IN THIS
COMMUNICATION. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF ELECTORAL RESULTS TO FOLLOW
BY AIRGRAM. END SUMMARY.

1. OVERALL VOTING RESULTS: EOPLES ACTION PARTY (PAP) SWEPT
ALL 69 PARLIAMENTARY SEATS, POLLING 72.4 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. OPPOSI-
TION PARTIES RECEIVED 25 PERCENT OF VOTES CAST AS COMPARED TO 29 PERC
ENT

IN 1972. SPOILED BALLOTS, AN INSIGNIFICANT MODE FOR MANIFESTATION
OF DISCONTENT, AMOUNTED TO 2.28 PERCENT, AN INCREASE OF 20
PERCENT OVER 1972. ALTHOUGH OPPOSITION PARTIES DECLINED IN OVERALL
ELECTORAL STRENGTH, THE AVERAGE OPPOSITION VOTE IN TWO-WAY CONTESTS,
EXCLUDING SPOILED BALLOTS, ROSE TO 27.03 PERCENT VS. 26.64 PERCENT
IN 1972.

COMMENT: DECLINE IN OVERALL OPPOSITION VOTES DESPITE
THE MINOR INCREASE IN THE OPPOSITION TWO-WAY CONTEST AVERAGE
REFLECTS THE DEARTH OF THREE-WAY CONTESTS THIS
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ELECTION. IN 1972, THE TOTAL OPPOSITION VOTE IN
THREE-WAY CONTESTS STOOD ABOUT 6 PERCENT ABOVE THAT IN
STRAIGHT FIGHTS, THUS HEIGHTENING THE OVERALL
OPPOSITION VOTE PERCENTAGE. END COMMENT).

2. VOTING BY CONSTITUENCY TYPE: OPPOSITION VOTES
IN FIVE SELECTED RURAL CONSTITUENCIES DECLINED TO

32 PERCENT IN 1976 FROM 38 PERCENT IN 1972. OPPOSITION VOTE IN FIVE SELECTED "MALAY" CONSTITUENCIES WAS 34.55 PERCENT IN 1976. THESE GERRYMANDERED AND REDEVELOPED CONSTITUENCIES, ALL OF WHICH WERE SCENE OF 3-WAY CONTESTS IN 1972, PRODUCED IN THAT YEAR AN AVERAGE 34.03 PERCENT OF THE VOTE FOR THE LARGEST OPPOSITION PARTY AND A COMBINED OPPOSITION AVERAGE VOTE OF 43.24 PERCENT. OPPOSITION VOTING IN THREE ENGLISH EDUCATED MIDDLE CLASS CONSTITUENCIES WAS ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 32.4 PERCENT. HOWEVER, ONLY ONE OF THESE CONSTITUENCIES WAS CONTESTED IN 1972. DR. TOH CHIN CHYE (PAP) DEFEATED DR. LEE SIEW CHOH, BARISAN SOCIALIS (BSS) IN ROCHORE, WITH BSS VOTE DECLINING FROM 39.6 PERCENT IN 1972 TO 34.5 PERCENT IN 1976.

3. ARRESTS: THREE INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN DETAINED OR ARRESTED WHILE POLICE ARE ACTIVELY SEARCHING FOR A FOURTH. EMBASSY ANTICIPATES FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. EMBASSY HAS ALREADY REPORTED DETENTION OF SHAMSUDDIN TUNG (REF C). UNITED FRONT PLANS HABEUS CORPUS ACTION WHICH STANDS LITTLE CHANCE OF SUCCESS. OTHER ARRESTS: (A) LEONG MUN KWAI, BANKRUPT WRITER AND FOUNDER OF DEFUNCT PEOPLE'S FRONT, ON TWO COUNTS OF CRIMINAL DEFAMATION FOR "INTENDING TO HARM THE REPUTATION" OF PM LEE BY ALLEGING THAT LEE & LEE CHARGES \$500 FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT BOARD (HDB) FLAT PURCHASE LEGAL EXPENSES. LEONG HAS PLEADED GUILTY AND RECEIVED 18 MONTH JAIL SENTENCE. HE PLANS TO APPEAL. (B) TENG AH BOO AKA TENG GOON KANG, BSS SUPPORTER, FOR CRIMINALLY DEFAING THE PRIME MINISTER BY LEVELING CHARGES ALMOST IDENTICAL TO THOSE OF LEONG. TENG'S APPEARANCE IN COURT HAS BEEN DEFERRED UNTIL JANUARY 9. UNCLASSIFIED

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4. SEARCH. POLICE ARE SEARCHING FOR HO JUAN THAI, A 26 YEAR OLD FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE NANYANG STUDENT UNION, WHO RAN FOR PARLIMENT ON THE WORKER'S PARTY TICKET. CONSIDERING THE CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS OF OTHER OPPOSITION CANDIDATES (SINGAPORE 5724, PARA 3), ADDITIONAL INDIVIDUALS MAY BE FACING AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE AS WELL.

5. PRIME MINISTER'S VICTORY SPEECH: PRIME MINISTER LEE'S POST ELECTION REMARKS IN DECEMBER 24 STRAITS TIMES PROVIDE MARKED CONTRAST TO TOH CHIN CHYE'S (REF B) AND STAND AS HIS LATEST WORD ON THE SUBJECT OF THE OPPOSITION. LEE DISCOUNTED THE OPPOSITION VOTE CLAIMING THERE IS A HARD-CORE PRO-COMMUNIST 10-12 PERCENT "ANTI-VOTES". ACCORDING TO LEE, MOST OTHER "REJECT VOTES" WERE FROM PEOPLE WITH GRUDGES AGAINST THE SYSTEM. A PERSON WHO CASTS A REJECT VOTE WAS REJECTING THE SYSTEM, AND WAS NOT PRO-OPPOSITION. LEE CONTRASTED HIS PORTRAIT OF THE OPPOSITION VOTE WITH THE PAP VOTE WHICH HE CALLED

A "SOLID AND DECISIVE" VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. "IT IS AN
ENDORSEMENT OF OUR POLICIES ON NATIONAL SERVICE...ON
PRO-COMMUNIST DETAINEES, AND ALSO OF OUR ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL POLICIES." (COMMENT: LEE USED THE TERM
"REJECT VOTE" TO MEAN A VOTE HE INTERPRETS AS REJECTING
THE SYSTEM. THIS SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH THE
TECHNICAL TERMS "REJECT VOTE" OR "SPOILT VOTE" WHICH
DESCRIBE WAYS BY WHICH BALLOTS CAN BE INVALIDATED IN
A COUNTRY WHERE VOTING IS COMPULSTORY. THE PM REFERES
TO A SEGMENT OF THE ELECTORATE CLEARLY LARGER THAN
2.28 PERCENT WHO CAST A POILED VOTE. END COMMENT).
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